



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2006
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

CRM
(202) 514-2008
TDD (202) 514-1888

CONTRACTOR SENTENCED FOR PAYING GRATUITIES TO FORMER U.S. ARMY DIRECTOR OF CONTRACTING

WASHINGTON – A U.S. contractor has been sentenced to six months in prison and six months of monitored home confinement for paying illegal gratuities to a former U.S. Army Director of Contracting and violating the Travel Act in connection with U.S. Army contracts awarded from an Army recreational facility in Germany, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

Ellis Aaron Abramson, 40, of Merrick, N.Y., was sentenced today by Judge Sandra J. Feurstein at the U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of New York, in Central Islip. Abramson, the president and former owner of Bramson House, Inc., admitted in his April 2006 guilty plea that he paid gratuities in connection with contracts awarded to Bramson House by the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort, Armed Forces Recreation Center (AFRC Europe), in Garmisch, Germany. The Department of the Army serves as the executive agent for the AFRC Europe, operating the AFRC Europe on behalf of the Department of Defense. Patrons at the AFRC Europe include active duty U.S. military personnel serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Abramson admitted that during the course of performing work under the contracts, he agreed to fraudulently inflate the invoices for certain line items and to submit the fraudulently inflated invoices to the Director of Contracting for approval. Abramson further admitted that he then gave \$23,000 in cash and other benefits directly and indirectly to the former Director of Contracting. Abramson also admitted that he agreed to inflate certain line items in a proposed modification to one of contracts by \$40,000 as part of a separate scheme to pay the former Director of Contracting a gratuity.

As part of his plea, Abramson agreed to provide \$23,000 in restitution to the U.S. government for the fraudulently inflated amount of the line items in the contract between Bramson House and the AFRC Europe.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division Command and the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations Division. It was prosecuted by Deputy Chief Mark F. Mendelsohn, Assistant Chief Deborah Gramiccioni, and Trial Attorney Suzanne R. Clement of the Fraud Section of the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

###